



MONTANA ARTS COUNCIL

Strengthening the Creative Economy of Montana

Public Value Partnership Grantees

Model Answers FY2013: Relationships, Relevance and Return on Investment

Relationships

Alberta Bair Theater, Billings

The implementation of critical upgrades to the Alberta Bair Theater's information technology in 2011 continues to be wildly successful in relationship building with our audiences, volunteers, staff and board members. By more efficiently utilizing electronic networking (ABT website, Facebook page, Twitter, and email blasts) ABT saw a 14.4% increase in ticket sales and an 87% increase in online ticket sales. In addition, ABT audiences now have instant online access to performing arts information and are demonstrating an increased knowledge of the cultural importance of the performing arts in the community and its importance in the community. Constituents directly affected by the upgrade number approximately 89,000 each year. An additional 300,000 residents in the area ABT serves are indirectly impacted due to greater website visibility, e-marketing, and access to tickets online.

The Alberta Bair Theater discovered that through effective use of the internet and social media there have been marked improvements in governance, fundraising, financial management, program delivery, and administration. In addition, ABT audiences are demonstrating a heightened understanding the arts as increasingly quality-of-life factors that influence the Rocky Mountain Northwest's current and future potential.

ABT's technology upgrade helped facilitate the belief that a creative economy uses arts and culture to revitalize a region's economic wellbeing. Residents in the region now have access to live performing arts information, including, but not limited to, upcoming ABT performances, art education, outreach, donor information, links to artists and art educators throughout the world.

The ABT feedback on the new website is used regularly by people for a variety of reasons. People may ask about bringing in artists, want to know about ticket on sale dates, thank the theater for a wonderful experience and even begin the ticket buying process. The past two years have seen a ten-fold increase in people purchasing tickets from the states of Idaho, Washington and Colorado. For the upcoming Kris Kristofferson performance a woman is flying from Seattle to Billings with her sister and mother, a life-long fan of Mr. Kristofferson. These sales and attendees are a direct result of ABT's enhanced website and ability to buy tickets real time on the internet.

Alpine Theatre Project, Whitefish

In 2013, ATP began a different approach to building relationships with its patron base - one that is more targeted and aims at deepening those relationships.

A series of cocktail meetings were held in the beginning of 2013 with patrons. This gave ATP staff an opportunity to explain in detail its master plan, programming, and goals for the year. In turn, patrons were able to ask questions, suggest programming, and offer suggestions for operations improvements.

ATP also held in June 2013, for the first time, a “volunteer fair” aimed at recruiting more volunteer involvement from the community. The fair was held and over 30 people registered. These volunteers became involved in ATP’s box office, front of house management, artist housing and travel, and even production. Numerous volunteers applauded ATP on reaching out to the community in a more meaningful way, thereby deepening its relationship with the community.

ATP continues to use social media networks like Facebook, Twitter, Google+, and YouTube to engage its constituents on a more immediate level. Artistic Director, Betsi Morrison, has used Facebook and Twitter to engage local students involved in ATP’s after school educational programs to gauge interest in different programming choices.

ATP also made a commitment in 2013 to incorporate education into almost every aspect of its programming. A “Broadway Master Class” series was begun in 2013 to engage local students and give them an opportunity to learn acting and musical theatre techniques from Broadway professionals. Over the course of 4 different sessions, 48 local students aging from 9-22 participated in the program.

Archie Bray Foundation, Helena

This past year we have hired a Membership Coordinator to refine and build our membership program.

Through this position we have had the opportunity to build relationships with our membership donors. Two weeks before membership renewal letters go out, Membership Coordinator Mitch Carroll calls all those that are on the membership renewal list for that month. He starts the conversation by thanking them for their membership, and then proceeds to make a direct association between their contribution and what has happened during their year of support. He talks of recent accomplishments, then moves on to upcoming events, tailoring the content to the member and their location, such as inviting locals to come out and visit, or directing out-of-state members to new website content. Mitch will also open the conversation so members can talk about their own connection to the Bray.

Through these efforts, we have learned that, overall, the members enjoy getting a thank you call and express their thanks for not only the call but for all that the Bray does for the ceramics community. We are learning that members support the Bray because they believe that we are contributing in a meaningful way to the development of today’s ceramic artists. Interestingly, the calls seem to build relationships proportionally to the existing relationship. Those who are already very close to the Bray are thrilled with the call, to the point of mentioning it in later conversations. The connection to those that are less-engaged is also strengthened in a step toward involving them further in our community.

Big Sky Film Institute, Missoula

Last year, the board and staff of the Big Sky Film Institute undertook a deliberate outreach campaign to develop stronger relationships with our supporters and audience, working on two initiatives. First, as one of Missoula’s most recognized and appreciated arts organizations, we undertook an organized yet informal campaign to reach out to political and community leaders, and our local and state-wide supporting organizations. Secondly, we seized the opportunity presented by the Tenth Anniversary of our premier

program, the Big Sky Documentary Film Festival (BSDFF) to build stronger bridges to many of Missoula's non-profit organizations and community businesses by offering a special opportunity for these organizations to partner with the presentation of films that aligned closely with their mission.

Over the course of the year, we met with Missoula Mayor John Engen, Redevelopment Agency Director Ellen Buchanan, and continued our working relationship with City Councilor Jason Weiner, a long-term Big Sky supporter. This effort led to the official—Mayor Engen opened the 10th Anniversary Big Sky Film Festival (BSDFF)—and non-official—Ellen Buchanan attended many screenings and Jason Weiner volunteered—participation of city officials in the film festival. We also met with many community leadership organizations—the Chamber of Commerce, Destination Missoula Tourism staff, members of the Sports Commission, and the Tourist Business Improvement District, Missoula Downtown Association, and United Way, to name a few. We built on our solid relationship with Montana PBS and University of Montana Media Arts and Journalism department leadership, opening the door for an expanded relationship with the University of Montana going into our next grant year. Additionally, we took advantage of the change of leadership in the Montana Film Office, to forge a strong and growing relationship with the new Montana Film Office Commissioner, which has resulted in strengthened arts programming for the Big Sky Documentary Film Festival and for the Big Sky Film Series, both programs of the Big Sky Film Institute.

As part of the Tenth Anniversary celebration of BSDFF, we collaborated to present film programming, including special program development around specific films/issues, with the following community organizations—Missoula Innocence Project, Jeannette Rankin Peace Center, Montana Farmers Union, KwaTuqNuk, Missoula Art Museum, Poverello Center, Zootown Arts Community Center, Central and Southeast Asian Studies Center, Sussex School, Missoula Children's Theatre, Missoula Public Library, and Missoula Aging Services.

We are continuing to see the positive benefit and impact of this intentional community outreach to the growth of our organization and the success of our mission.

Bozeman Symphony

The Bozeman Symphony made personal contact and follow-up with our audience and supporters a priority last year. We increased our contact with patrons with phone calls made by Board Members, Staff and Volunteers on a regular basis. We have found that our supporters had great things to say about the Bozeman Symphony and also many suggestions that allowed us to take a look at our processes and procedures. This has allowed us to improve our patron services.

We continue to continue our Dress Rehearsal evening with our Treats for Tickets program. Each concert, one elementary or middle school music class volunteers to bring a plate of treats for the musicians break time in exchange for tickets for one of the week-end performances for them and a parent. They also receive the opportunity to stay for the dress rehearsal. The most amazing aspect of the program is watching the young student musicians (who serve the treats) and their parents visiting with and learning from the musicians and music conductor. Last season's Treats for Tickets Volunteer Coordinator and the Bozeman Symphony believe that this program inspires and motivates students to work towards excelling on their instruments to one day be a part of a symphony orchestra or choir. The program also gives participating students and their parents an educational opportunity to learn about the rehearsal process, the musicians, guest artists, music and instruments of the orchestra.

The Bozeman Symphony continues to offer after concert receptions at area locations where we have increased the number of patrons and musicians that attend. Our Music Director and Guest Artists also attended this past year. There are limitless opportunities for the audience, both young and old, to visit one

on one with our internationally known guest artists, local musicians and our Music Director. Not only does educational learning take place, but relationships are started that last a lifetime. We learned that our audience is appreciative of this opportunity to learn more about the music and the musicians.

Butte Symphony

We partnered with the Urban Revitalization Authority, Main Street Uptown Butte, Movies at the Original and the Butte Center for the Performing Arts to present the orchestra to the SW Montana Community in a film/orchestra extravaganza at the Original Mine Frame venue in uptown Butte! Through this partnering we made many different contacts that we were not aware of previously. This has led to more businesses being involved with our organization on a sponsorship level. Last year we had 1 concert sponsor. This year we are currently at 7 with more to come! What we learned as an organization is that we need to work with as many other organizations as possible and to get community leaders involved and excited about what the Butte Symphony is doing for the community!!!

CoMotion Dance, Missoula

We toured Fire Speaks the Land for its second season. The 50-minute active-audiences performance uses dance to teach about fire science, fire ecology and forest regeneration. Conversations with teachers have helped us to understand how we can use dance to enhance knowledge about fire curriculum. While doing the research on fire ecology we forged new relationships with the US Forest Service. Vita Wright (Flathead Nat'l Forest), Jane Kapler Smith, ecologist with the Missoula Sciences Fire Lab and Terina Goachochia (BLM) collaborated with us. Singer/songwriter Jack Gladstone partnered with us at a residency at Seeley Lake School and narrated the native uses of fire sections, adding his own experiences and cultural knowledge to the soundscore. Ten Montana musicians worked collaboratively to compose original sound scores for the piece. We collaborated with a lighting designer, four costume designers and a scenic designer. Thanks to these partners, we have new individuals working with us who are now familiar with our work.

Emerson Cultural Center, Bozeman

The Emerson also invested a significant amount of time in developing our social media. In the past year we have doubled our "likes" on Facebook. We now have over 2,500 individuals that follow all of the happenings at the Emerson via social media. While this may seem trivial it has proven over and over again a great way for us to connect directly with the Emerson audience - of all ages and interests.

Fort Peck Fine Arts Council

Over the years the Fort Peck Fine Arts Council has seen our relationship with the Glasgow School District grow from parallel service systems into a complimentary partnership. For years the schools provided their own programming and appreciated ours as separate non-educational summer entertainment. Over time, as we initiated educational programming to bring into the schools, this relationship began to change. The change in attitude started with short term artist residencies and Missoula Children's Theatre, financed by the FPFAC, and moved on to Montana Rep productions with workshops in the classroom and long term

residencies cofunded between FPFAC and Glasgow Public Schools. Over that same time frame, the Fort Peck Theatre Performing Arts Camp evolved.

Having just completed our 16th annual Camp, we look back to the beginning when transportation to Fort Peck (17 miles from Glasgow) was a problem and sites in Glasgow to host the camp were difficult to find. We approached the Glasgow School District because they had the facilities we needed for classrooms and performing space. At that time, however, it was out of the question due to their stated policy of prohibiting non-school activities on school property in the summer. We knew there were summer sport camps, etc. held on school property, but we were denied.

After a few years, as Camp participation grew, we needed a larger venue and we moved the camp to the Theatre at Fort Peck providing transportation through a bus contract with the Valley County Senior Citizen Organization. When that option became unavailable our Executive Director approached the Athletic Director of the Glasgow Public School system to inquire as to the feasibility of using a public school bus. We learned their bus could only be operated by a District driver, but the possibility was entertained. The Glasgow School Board voted to approve this arrangement, bus and driver at no charge with the FPFAC responsible only for the gas. The recommendation of the Athletic Director to the Board for approval was because these are “our kids” who are benefiting from this educational opportunity.

The FPFAC has proven that quality programming with reliable, trust worthy leadership and financially sound practices leads beyond an appreciation for the arts and to a greater recognition of the value the arts have to the community.

Glacier Symphony, Kalispell

Last year we began a new event series called the “Symphony Soloist Spotlight”. It is an event that is held in a unique intimate setting (Alpine Ballroom on Main Street in Kalispell) on the Thursday evenings of concert week. We have asked the guest artists performing that weekend to arrive one day early and to prepare a personal program that intentionally connects them with the audience. They perform, do an interview with the Maestro, and answer questions from the audience. The intention of the event series was to allow the audience to have a closer, more personal interaction with the guest artists prior to the weekend’s performance. It was also anticipated that the setting may be less intimidating than the formal concert hall for people to experience the performance of live classical music.

We learned during the past year that this is a great forum for developing relationships with our audience and new community members, and that because of the informal setting, there is a definite chance for two way dialogue. Both the guest artist as well as the Maestro are circulating among the audience, fielding questions, and having personal interaction that does not happen naturally at the concert hall.

By the end of last season (April 2013) the Symphony Soloist Spotlight events were selling out and we have had to increase seating capacity for the start of the 2013-14 season.

Great Falls Symphony

The future of the arts in general and in our case the Great Falls Symphony in particular depends upon the relationships we establish “today” with students and the public, private and home school system to build audiences and patrons for the future. The GFSA sees this role as critical to our very existence and devotes a significant amount of human and financial resources to continually strengthen relationships with schools, teachers and students in our service area. We strive to accomplish this goal in various ways. A good

example this past year was the expansion of our Youth Matinee Series through a partnership with Vision Net, a statewide video conferencing network, to broadcast the orchestra's two student matinees to students in rural areas beyond the radius of schools able to bring their students to the live performances at the Mansfield Theater. In addition to over 2,500 students from Great Falls public, private and area home schools as well as students from over 30 schools within the region who attended the live performance, the partnership with Vision Net allowed the orchestra to connect with an additional 1,000 children in classrooms as far as Rocky Boy, Lodge Grass, Arlee, Darby, Judith Gap, Sunburst, Nashua, Twin Bridges, Seeley, Chinook and more. The classroom experience is preceded by an educational packet for each child and followed by a post-concert live question and answer session for video conferencing participants hosted by conductor Gordon Johnson and a number of musicians from the orchestra. This marked the first time that the Youth Matinee performances have been available to students outside the conference hall, and although we believe in the power of live music, this opportunity to utilize technology to share the experience with an expanded audience was extremely rewarding and evaluated most positively. The partnership and service provided by Vision Net, will continue into this next year in a continuing effort to establish relationships with students in rural schools across Montana through a real-time "live" video feed.

Hockaday Museum of Art, Kalispell

The Hockaday Museum of Art has a long history of working with the community. In FY12 & 13, we worked in collaboration with our community partners in the Kalispell Downtown Association., and business owners in the downtown Kalispell business community. The Director is on the Board of the KDA and uses the relationship to ensure the Museum's participation to work on community based events. The Museum hosted the final stop for the Run Through History where participants ran through downtown Kalispell. One of our partners was National Flood who sponsored the event and hosted the barbeque that followed immediately after the event. The interaction provides the Museum with a grass roots perspective of how local organizations work for the greater good of the community.

The Museum includes at-risk youth in our activities. The Center of Restorative Justice is located a short distance from the Museum. The youth have discovered how accessible and interesting their local art museum is and how their contribution helps us to present our best foot forward to keep the Museum sparkling and clean. We have tapped their energy and enthusiasm to clean the galleries, paint the galleries, uncrate exhibits, set up for events, and remove graffiti from exterior walls. Many have volunteered to set-up and tear down at public exhibit receptions. For the Museum, it is an opportunity to build personal relationships with bright young people who need someone to give them a second chance.

Our education programs are held in high esteem in the community. We have worked closely the Kalispell Education Foundation to bring artist in residence and outreach programs to area schools. Director Mike Kofford, solicits our collaboration annually and assists with the grant applications for the programming. Building relationships with the Foundation extends our influence to the community and underscores the need for cultural experiences for students beyond what the schools can provide.

Intermountain Opera Association, Bozeman

For the first time in IOB's 35 year history the initial rehearsal of the production process was open to the public. Guest artists arrive in town on a Friday two weeks prior to the first performance. On Saturday afternoon they meet each other, often for the first time, and along with the conductor, director, chorus and pianist they have a musical read through of the opera. Allowing the public to experience this beginning of

the production process brings understanding of the intensity and tireless commitment of the artists. Many of those who saw this first step of the process were dumbfounded with the final product. The two weeks of rehearsal develop not only the music of the opera, but the personalities of the characters, the emotion of the story and the look and feel of the era, which all come together in the performance. The final product is a cohesive performance underlined by the deep respect and closeness developed between the artists during the production process.

This past year was also the first year of a new outreach and education coordinator. As a mother of elementary through high school students herself she was very excited and brought some great new programs to life. One of these programs works with the High School choirs. The High School students learn one of the pieces from the opera during the semester. During the week of prior to the opera performance, opera chorus members and guest artists, if available, visit the chorus and sing the piece with them. This first-hand experience of learning an operatic choral piece and then singing it with the actual people who will be on stage, give the High School students a true picture of the skill and artistry behind just one part of opera production.

MCT, Missoula

WHAT WE DID:

We created a beautiful scrapbook for a major donor by scanning photographs and thank-you letters. The letters are from Montana youth who were in the cast of one of MCT's touring children's musicals, and the photographs feature kids rehearsing or acting on stage in their costumes. The letters and photos come from at least 20 communities throughout Montana. We designed the book in-house and included a personal message to the donor from Michael (MCT ED). We sent all the materials to a company that specializes in keepsake books, and the finished product is professionally printed (in color) and bound. We added plastic sleeves to the book in order to include more thank you letters/photos. The donor loves the book and has shown it to many friends/colleagues.

WHAT WE LEARNED:

We learned that donors want to showcase their work with MCT and that giving them an appealing scrapbook they can easily share with others is a catalyst for sparking conversations about MCT and the importance of the arts in Montana. We also learned that a book of photos and stories can be more powerful than posting the same materials online.

Missoula Art Museum (MAM)

MAM is striving to increase the exposure and interaction between our audience and the exhibiting artists that we present. As a contemporary art museum we present almost exclusively living artists. MAM engages artists as the primary source for art education. We engage each exhibiting artist in presenting formal lectures or informal gallery talks about their work as well as conducting a hands-on workshop, demonstration or master class.

Last year we tried a different opportunity with three artists who were commissioned by MAM to make site-specific installations in our galleries. In an attempt to provide less formal interaction, MAM created informal "artists residencies," inviting the public in to observe and interact with artists as they were building their work. This worked so well in some instances that the progress of the installation was slowed because of lengthy conversations between visitors and artists. It also inspired community members to offer to help the artists. University of Montana Art Department Professors brought classes to the galleries to

spend their class time hanging-out with artists. Each of the artists made new fans of their work who became friends. Spontaneous socialization took place that wasn't arranged by the museum. We witnessed an increased sense of ownership in the visitors when they came to the opening reception after experiencing the work in progress, and having insider information after interacting with the artist beforehand.

To keep the artist's voice present in the exhibition after the installation is complete, MAM strives to create audio spots recorded by the exhibiting artist, as well as video interviews or filmed gallery talks in the exhibitions.

Missoula Cultural Council

The release of Art and Economic Prosperity IV in June 2012 (described in Return on Investment below) has had a great impact on local opinion, as more now see the direct impact that art and cultural activities have on our community. One of the results has been a greater awareness of the arts organizations, and the opportunity that this report and its publicity have had meetings this past year to develop strategies for leveraging this information to the larger benefit of the community. In the upcoming year, this group of art administrators plans to meet with local business, government and media leaders to broaden the discussion for entrepreneurship in the arts industry. Because of the busy schedules of all involved, this project will take time to develop and implement. However, the simple act of convening as a group has made a great impact on our local industry. Over the years Missoula's arts groups have had difficulty staying focused on a large community initiative, yet this study and its effects seem to be changing that dynamic. There are more organization leaders interested in collective marketing and branding Missoula's art and culture. What we have learned about relationship building in this case is that it is a slow and steady process, but one which, if we are persistent, will reap great benefit for Missoula and western Montana.

Missoula Writing Collaborative

Our two-week summer camp, Words With Wings, continues to be a model for relationship-building in all our programs.

A number of our camp attendees have aged out of the program, which serves kids from 8-14. They still want to participate during the July camp, though, so we began a successful TA program, with high school kids who were formerly campers now helping out. They are able to develop both writing and teaching skills, and the younger kids aspire to be like these fine young adults in every way. We also have incorporated college interns into the camp. These young people mentor the high school TA's, and also teach the younger kids directly. We also have one or two Camp Grandmas, who participate in all the activities, both the writing sessions and the afternoon field trips to urban and wilderness locales. The climate of the camp has evolved into a family atmosphere in the very best sense of the family, with everyone benefiting in different ways.

Our seasoned summer camp writing teachers also teach in our school residencies. They say the camp experience continues to convince them of the power of creativity to shape lives over the years.

Montana Ballet, Bozeman

Our Co-Artistic Directors continue to grow our relationship with the Southwest Montana Arts Council. Expanding our Nutcracker tradition to Dillon has been an exciting step for MBC. The overwhelmingly positive response we received from our 2011 and 2012 performances demonstrates that a strong demand for performing arts exists in the Dillon community, to the extent that Dillon has requested that we add a second performance to our 2013 season. We hope to maintain and expand our collaboration with the Southwest Arts Council to support increased access to live dance performances in the greater Dillon area.

Montana Repertory Theatre, Missoula

Teresa Waldorf, our head of Educational Outreach is continuously engaged with our presenters in the state (high school and middle school teachers and principals, librarians and community leaders) to create programming mutually beneficial to all parties. She checks in with the presenters about curriculum to determine the appropriate stories and workshops to bring to the communities. Teresa is sensitive to the choice of subject matter to assure that the works we bring are appropriate for the audiences we visit. Her work is ongoing, comprehensive and thorough. The Montana Rep is in constant contact with all the presenters in the nation as we bring quality theatre and workshops to over 60 communities in America, mostly small to medium sized towns. The company pays particular attention to the needs of Montana presenters for the National Tour, offering significant discounts and creative income distribution ideas to our statewide presenters. One such example is our relationship with The Alberta Bair Theatre in Billings. We have devised a profit sharing model that works well for the presenter and enables us to continue our presence in this all important market. The Montana Rep also has formed a partnership with the Alumni Association at The University of Montana to enhance the audience participation in Butte and Billings. The Company explores community partnerships with regional and local entities to enhance the community involvement in social issues through theatre. Two such recent examples are the partnership with St Patrick's Hospital where, through a series of plays, end-of-life issues were presented, and a "get out to vote" presentation with various local groups in Missoula.

What is learned from all these relationship building efforts is that there is really no alternative. A vibrant ongoing arts organization should and must, as part of its mission, engage the community in a meaningful and productive way. The Montana Rep's pro-active engagement with the community, coupled with our always excellent product, creates vital and ongoing partnerships of which the company is very proud.

Montana Shakespeare in the Parks, Bozeman

Because Montana Shakespeare in the Parks' (MSIP) mission is to make available professional productions of Shakespeare and other classics in communities with a focus on those that are rural and underserved, strong and personal relationships are natural byproducts of the tour. This occurs when the MSIP office staff makes direct phone calls to tour coordinators before and after the company's visit to their town, but it is most effective when the actors build relationships with the community members before and after each performance. The MSIP tour actors visit 60 communities over the course of the summer tour. With the exception of some of the larger communities (Missoula, Billings, etc.), community members often provide potluck lunches and dinners for the actors. The 10 actors who hail from all over the United States get to share a meal and learn about individual community members and the town itself in nearly every community. One third of the communities that bring Shakespeare in the Parks to their town also put the actors up in local families' homes. Oftentimes this creates relationships that become lifelong friendships.

Susan Wolfe, the tour coordinator from Forsyth, MT started off as a tour host for a number of actors in 2001. At that time, her son was 6 years old and fascinated by the swordfights in Henry IV, Part II. When the

actors left town, they presented her son with one of the swords that was no longer being used in the performance as a thank you gift. Now, 11 years later, these same actors keep in touch with Ms. Wolfe and her family. She has since become the art teacher at Lame Deer middle and high schools, and has maintained a strong bond with Shakespeare in the Parks, bringing both its fall and spring educational outreach tours to Lame Deer Elementary, Middle and High Schools. Now when she travels, and finds herself in the hometown of one of these actors, she and her now teenage son are invited to dinner at their home. This is just one example of the strong relationships that are forged between the actors and community members because of Shakespeare in the Parks.

Southwest Montana Arts Council, Dillon

We actively promote the Arts Council as the driving force in our community advocating the arts which enlarges the visibility & place of the arts in the daily lives of citizens and identifies the community at one known for excellence and cultural diversity in arts programming. The Southwest Montana Arts Council has two groups of consistent supporters, local business Event Sponsors and individual donors or “Friends of the Arts”. Each year we personally contact all our supporters through an annual phone-a-thon & personal visit. Opportunities are taken to elicit their input as to “how are we doing”. Suggestions are noted and then considered by the full board of directors. Formal thank you letters are sent out expressing our appreciation for their continued financial support. These outline our mission/dedication to honor their support/trust to keep season ticket prices affordable and provide quality arts programming that enriches our entire community. All Event Sponsors and Friends of the Arts are listed in programs, newsletters, season posters advertising the entire Showcase Series and/or the summer Dinner/Lunch in the Park series. All Sponsors and Friends of the Arts names are published on our website as well. Arts Council members make a personal visit to the Sponsors following each event thanking them for their support and give them a poster signed by the visiting artists they help fund. We have built solid relationships with community leaders by becoming active in both the Beaverhead Chamber of Commerce and a local downtown business organization, Beaverhead Business Builders. We have collaborated with these groups by assisting and participating in their seasonal community festivals and they in turn have collaborated with us in advertising our year around events and hosting venue sites for our bi-annual Art Walks. We open our free to the community summer Dinner concerts to non-profit food vendors who prepare and serve a meal during the events. All proceeds then go to that specific civic organization as a fundraiser for the work they do. Each of our Showcase concerts includes an artist outreach enabling us to partner with the local schools and provide experiential opportunities for our underserved youth in arts education. Showcase outreach also includes local dance studios, the Dillion Jr. Fiddlers, the Montana National Guard Youth Challenge program, and our local YMCA. At all our Showcase concert events the Arts Council hosts a pre-show reception of light refreshments and open the adjoining university art gallery to our audience. If possible, we ask the performing artists for the evening to join the reception and interact with audience members as well.

Sunburst Community Foundation, Eureka

There is a group of musicians in the area (Eureka Folk Music Society) who usually do not attend concerts in our winter series. I found this perplexing so I asked them last year what would bring them to a concert. The answer which surprised me was Cajun music. It took a while and a lot of effort for me to track down an authentic Cajun band from Lafayette, Louisiana (BonSoir, Catin), to arrange for them to come up and to find the funding to bring them to Eureka. But the end result was worth it. The local musicians were awesome helping to host the members of the Cajun band. We had a fantastic turn out at the concert. The next

evening we did a community potluck and jam. Again - great turnout. I realized that even though I think I have the pulse of the community on what sort of music to bring in for our series - getting local groups to actively participate in the selection can make a difference. Also - not only did Sunburst and our communities benefit from bringing in this particular band, but the band has now applied to the Montana Folk Festival. Their gig with us was their first in Montana and they thoroughly enjoyed the people and the land. They promised to visit Eureka again if they make it up to Butte next summer for the festival.

VSA Arts of Montana, Missoula

A practical and successful example of relationship building is evident in the work of two volunteers from the Billings area. They educated their community about the work of VSA, the need for the arts and how the lives of people with disabilities are impacted by the arts. Through community awareness and education, they were able to raise \$3000 for our Billings program at Rainbow House, a day treatment center for adults with mental illness. This example is successful not only from the funding aspect but also from the community educational standpoint. The additional funding raised supplemented the funds already in place to enable a small project to continue, to create a stipend for the teacher, a woman with a disability, and allow for more supplies.

Another very successful example of relationship building can be seen in our New Visions Dance Class which is run in partnership with the University of Montana. I have been able to witness first-hand how the elements of community, music and dance have built relationships. New Visions is a program which allows adults with disabilities to participate in a dance class with students of the UM Dance Department. The teacher, Heidi Eggert, skillfully engages VSA participants, many of whom return season after season because they have experienced the joy of movement and a comfortable environment for exploration. Heidi has created an inclusive classroom experience which allows all her students to explore how moving together engages relationships - teacher to student, student to student, person to person. A great deal of relationship building is not just about verbal communication but also about how we move, together, in rhythm and harmony. Dance is the perfect catalysts for non-verbal communication, expression, and one on one relationship building.

An additional partnership which results in successful relationship building is with Summit Independent Living in Missoula. This past year we partnered with Summit to provide a variety of programming including a visual arts program for adults with disabilities and a number of social events. At the most recent event, a summer BBQ in the park on free concert night, not only did we partner with Summit to make the event happen but also with Community Home Based Services, Bridges Program at Community Hospital, Missoula Aging Services and MonTech. All of these outings offer an opportunity for socializing, participation in community events and cultural activities, and awareness education. We are pleased to partner with so many fine organizations who support our mission.

Whitefish Theatre Company

Whitefish Theatre Co. performed a Black Curtain Readers' Theatre presentation of Lombardi. Whitefish Credit Union, a local business and a strong supporter of Whitefish Theatre Co. asked if we would hold a special performance for its employees. Lombardi represented strong individualism and inspirational leadership and the Credit Union management wanted to bring this performance to its staff members. Over 70 employees and management personnel attended the special performance held at the O'Shaughnessy

Center. The events provided WTC with a new avenue for building relationships with our audience and supporters.

Relevance

Albert Bair Theater, Billings

Project Hip-Hop: The Alberta Bair Theater is entering its second year of partnering with health and fitness organizations in Billings to promote physical fitness among area youth. Activities include early morning dance workouts with more than 300 fifth and sixth graders in the gymnasiums of five schools in Billings and Laurel, a residency at each of the schools on urban dance by an acclaimed dancer/teaching artist, and two school matinees for grades 4-12 at ABT. Because Project Hip Hop is targeting Title I schools, ABT is helping to improve the education opportunities of low income individuals. Studies have shown that regular physical activity among adolescents improves students' academic performance, including academic achievement and grades, academic behavior such as time on task, and factors that influence academic achievement, such as concentration and attentiveness in the classroom. Results from Project Hip Hop's first year showed an increase in daily attendance by those students participating in the early morning Hip Hop sessions. The project also reached underserved elementary school students in Yellowstone County who have had little exposure to the concept of dance as exercise, and even less exposure to urban-themed music and dance, which contributes to the enhancement of cultural and artistic life of the community. These elements, combined in a regular workout regime, set the stage for students to create, imagine, and explore ways in which they can move their bodies, get in shape, and appreciate different types of dance and music.

Individual School Sponsorships: Due largely in part to ABT Board Member Leslie Pittman, more than 2,000 at risk school students in Yellowstone County were able to attend an ABT school matinee at no cost during the 2012-13 school year, Ms. Pitman worked tirelessly to secure \$10,000 to fund the program. Her goal for 2013-2014 is to ensure that every student in the county attends one or more ABT school matinee performances.

Alpine Theatre Project, Whitefish

In 2013, ATP began a different approach to building relationships with its patron base - one that is more targeted and aims at deepening those relationships.

A series of cocktail meetings were held in the beginning of 2013 with patrons. This gave ATP staff an opportunity to explain in detail its master plan, programming, and goals for the year. In turn, patrons were able to ask questions, suggest programming, and offer suggestions for operations improvements.

ATP also held in June 2013, for the the first time, a "volunteer fair" aimed at recruiting more volunteer involvement from the community. The fair was held and over 30 people registered. These volunteers became involved in ATP's box office, front of house management, artist housing and travel, and even production. Numerous volunteers applauded ATP on reaching out to the community in a more meaningful way, thereby deepening its relationship with the community.

ATP continues to use social media networks like Facebook, Twitter, Google+, and YouTube to engage its constituents on a more immediate level. Artistic Director, Betsi Morrison, has used Facebook and Twitter to engage local students involved in ATP's after school educational programs to gauge interest in different programming choices.

ATP also made a commitment in 2013 to incorporate education into almost every aspect of its programming. A "Broadway Master Class" series was begun in 2013 to engage local students and give them an opportunity to learn acting and musical theatre techniques from Broadway professionals. Over the course of 4 different sessions, 48 local students aging from 9-22 participated in the program.

ArtMobile, Statewide

This past year we worked to connect Montana peoples through their artworks, relevant to our theme:

Montana's Cultures. Our selection of art and our lessons reflected the theme, in a wide variety of topics that the artworks addressed. Jack Gladstone, well known singer/entertainer and Blackfeet singer and poet, came to present at three of the schools: Charlo, Dixon, and Arlee.

We showed 38 works of art this year, including: 3 stitched fabric pieces by the Hmong peoples; a model of a Metis Indian wooden cart, shown and loaned by Al Wiseman, Metis Indian and expert on the Old North Trail and the wooden carts used to transport buffalo hides; 15 works by Native American artists; a photo: "Sam Hofer Hutterite Elder" by Kurt Keller; several abstract works; a work by Dana Boussard that relates to hate crimes and the hate books installation; a photograph of the Milky Way by Jeff Van Tine that shows the lights of Helena and Bozeman in the distance, and emphasized the Dark Sky issues; an assortment of paintings that relate to Montana in one way or another; a drawing by Susann Lavold; two ceramic works; a glass sculpture; and two handmade books by Connie Landis of MSU Billings.

Our art lessons hinged from the artworks in our exhibit, including the 5 schools that created group abstract murals in response to Jeff Van Tine's digital time lapse photograph of the Milky Way. Please see "Additional Documentation #2" below for the photo of one of the murals.

Other lessons hinged from artworks in our exhibit. For example, from Frank Finley's "Antelope" and "Traveling Painting" - images of pictographs and petroglyphs - Bob Worthy, Teaching Artist and AMM Board Member, helped students develop "some fairly deep personal associations between students and drawing or painting a representation of themselves interacting with a helpful spirit". Other students created their own versions of some of the artworks, such as "Red Summer Lodge" by Allen Knows His Gun.

Big Sky Film Institute, Missoula

Without a doubt, the annual audience survey that we undertake as part of the Big Sky Documentary Film Festival (BSDFF) is the most effective and focused feedback mechanism for the Institute. The survey provides important demographic data to ensure that we understand and are sensitive to our audience when developing programming. More than that, though, is the opportunity that the survey provides participants to let us know what they like, dislike, would like to see more of; or topics, groups, and interests they feel are underrepresented in our programming. One of the most interesting demographic data points that we uncovered is that 29% of the Big Sky Film Festival's audience is 50 years of age or older. This told us that we needed to do two things—develop film programming that is interesting to and involves our older audience, and to work harder to attract the younger demographic and engage that group in an appreciation of the power of the nonfiction-film art form.

In direct response to the concerns of our older audience, the 2013 BSDFF showcased a series of films about aging—"Younger Than Yesterday." This series of films covered topics as diverse as life-affirming late-in-life career change, confronting mortality, elder activists, redemption of long-lost wartime love, the senior dating scene, and the compelling tale of the last Ecuadorian glacial ice chipper. The films were well-attended, with at least one a sellout ("Love at a Certain Age").

Regarding the objective of reaching out to and engaging a younger demographic in documentary film and the Institute's programs, we embarked on an analysis of what the Institute had done under the supervision of the former BSDFF Director, Mike Steinberg, primarily the management of Big Sky's Filmmaker in the Schools (FIS) program. The staff and board decided to continue the FIS program as part of the 2013 BSDFF,

but discussed ways to expand the program or develop new programs to serve and address the interests of this formative age group. As a result of this self-evaluative process, the Institute is working to develop a documentary film mentorship program/challenge to engage 20-25 interested high-schoolers who will be mentored and given the opportunity to work collaboratively on the production of a short doc to be premiered at the 2014 festival. We also successfully recruited a larger pool of college-age interns who will be mentored and integrated into the 2014 festival.

It is also worth mentioning that the overwhelming positive audience response to another of the 2013 festival series, “Art Is,” (films about art and artists) gave birth to the rejuvenation of the Big Sky Film Series which has become a weekly series of films, primarily about contemporary art and culture, that screen every Monday night at Missoula’s new film venue, The Top Hat Lounge—another newly-minted Big Sky Film Institute community partnership.

CoMotion Dance, Missoula

This year our performance outreach featured five dancers, a stage manager and a videographer who traveled to the schools to perform “Fire Speaks the Land”—a 50-minute performance piece designed for K-8 school children. The performance is highly relevant to students’ academic learning and addresses an issue critical to the Northern Rockies ecosystem: Fire. The most specific technique we used to make this new work relevant was to draw from the Montana science curriculum. The piece teaches about the fire triangle (fuel, heat & oxygen) and how fire burns (convection, conduction & radiation). In addition the piece addresses Indian Education for All as it narrates and performs the role fire played in traditional Native Americans’ lives. Montanans experience smoky air during the summer, as fires burn near our communities, Fire Speaks gives a basis for understanding the complex role fire plays in our lives. This constitutes the most specific technique we’ve found to create greater connections with our audience.

The audience is highly involved; we invite them to participate, both from their seats and on stage. This creates a direct connection between the performers and the audience, dispels the notion that dancers are on “a pedestal”, and enables everyone to experience the art form of dance. Our audience’s reactions to the dances and the themes have been helpful to the choreographer and performers. As one teacher said “This dance was the best science lesson I have ever seen!” The Plains School superintendent congratulated us and said his son talked about it all weekend. Direct involvement with our audience is deeply meaningful to the performer and the viewer. It’s an approach we plan to continue.

Emerson Cultural Center, Bozeman

The Emerson requests feedback on the “Schools in the Gallery” exhibit tour program, both informally in conversation and through evaluation forms, and we use this feedback to change, improve and plan for upcoming exhibits. We continue to attract and engage newly retired and often beloved teachers to join us as volunteer docents and lead tours for the “Schools in the Gallery” program. We offer free gallery talks and films by artists, and invite community members to interact and engage during Art Walk receptions.

Fort Peck Fine Arts Council

As a Language Arts educator at Glasgow High School, I had the opportunity to observe the relevance and benefit of the Artist in Residence program offered through the Fort Peck Fine Arts Council, Inc., first hand. Each year for the past five years, a highly skilled and knowledgeable professional actor spent two weeks

with my students bringing Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet to life. Although the students had read the play and discussed the language, conflicts, characters, and themes extensively before the artist's arrival, it wasn't until he directed them in a performance of a scene upon the school's stage that the power and beauty of the play came to life. The artist was able to make the play "real" to the students by interpreting the language in 21st century terms and showing them that the dreams, fears, and problems of teenagers really haven't changed that much over hundreds of years. The poetry of the play was made more accessible by his articulate expression and dramatic interpretation and left the students thoroughly impressed with Shakespeare's genius. The student evaluations I conducted each year at the end of the residency were very positive, and students often commented that they wished they could have more opportunities like this one. Since Glasgow High School no longer offers drama as a course, this experience has given a number of them an interest and confidence to pursue a part in the Fort Peck Summer Theatre program or in other extra-curricular dramatic performances.

Glacier Symphony, Kalispell

One of the programs that the Glacier Symphony and Chorale undertakes each year is the opportunity for local music students and music classes to participate in a master class format workshop. The guest artists performing with the Symphony or Chorale work one-on-one with students in front of the class, often open to the public. The impact that this intense personal interaction has on both the participant and those visiting is very impressive, not to mention the impact on the parents and families. We received the following letter from a parent....

September 17, 2012

Dear Glacier Symphony and Chorale,

I would like to express my thankfulness in bringing the Fry Street Quartet to the Flathead Valley. My kids and I enjoyed their Friday night performance - but even more so my son Andrew had the opportunity to participate in the master class on Saturday. I must confess that we really didn't know what we were getting into. Andrew just started his third year on viola and is a student at Kalispell Middle School. He was more than a little nervous when he stepped into the church and heard some of the other students warming up and completely intimidated by the previous night's performance. The members of the group quickly put him at ease and gave him the option of just being an observer or giving it a try and playing for them. Andy gave it a go and I am so glad he did! Intimidation turned into inspiration as Mr. Brad Ottesen and Ms. Anne Bayliss worked for 40 minutes with my son! I am so pleased that they worked with him on his level. I wish more students in the area could have participated as I witnessed the same attention given to each young musician that day. As a mom I was thrilled to hear my son say to me on the trip home: "I'm glad I went to the master class because I wouldn't have wanted to miss out on learning from somebody that is so good." I have nothing but good to say and thank the Glacier Symphony and Chorale for providing this experience for our young people.

Sincerely, Brigitte Schultz

Great Falls Symphony

One of the most effective ways that the GFSA uses to create connections with our constituents is by striving to personalize each concert experience for different segments of our community, i.e. students, young adults, special needs populations, etc. Perhaps the best example this past season was the residency that was created for World Artist Series performer, percussionist Evelyn Glennie. Profoundly deaf from her early

school years, Evelyn was an inspiration to all who met and “heard” her. The residency was designed to utilize her performance skills along with her passion for music education and personal mission to teach people of all ages, how to listen with not only their ears, but with their entire body. She was involved in an evening Q&A session for educators at the Russell Museum, was a special guest on a program at the Montana School for the Deaf and Blind, presented by “Expressions of Silence,” their performance group that has been featured nationally a number of times, worked with percussionists in the high schools and the Symphony’s Youth Orchestra, and of course performed with the Great Falls Symphony Orchestra for an appreciative audience made up of people from throughout the state of Montana. Evelyn’s presence in our community touched us in many powerful ways, expanded our perception of sound and created connections with a people of all ages.

Hockaday Museum of Art, Kalispell

The Hockaday’s commitment to enriching the cultural life of our community is reflected in the scope and quality of its programs. In March of 2012, the Hockaday acquired 15 Glacier National Park Murals. Glacier National Park and the railroad are uniquely intertwined with the development of the northwest.

Transportation enabled the area to become settled and still supports the local economy by providing jobs and bringing visitors to the region. Louis Hill the president of the Great Northern Railway hired many artists as part of the “See America First” publicity campaign to attract tourists to visit the area. As a result the lodges were decorated with 51 murals bringing the grandeur of the landscape indoors for the visitors to enjoy. The Museum was lucky enough to be gifted with 15 murals from a private donor. The donors Leanne and Alan Goldhahn, selected the Hockaday to be guardians of the historic murals after interviewing several other institutions. Their decision was based on the mission of the organization, and willingness to articulate their concerns in the Deed of Gift that the Museum would conserve and keep the collection together for future generations to enjoy.

The Hockaday’s curatorial focus is on the art and culture of Glacier National Park and the Northern Plains Indian Nations. The summer exhibition series featured work by the Blackfeet Nation. Blackfeet Portraits is a traveling exhibition of 15-25 large scale portraits created by Cheryl Dineen Ferrin. Portraits are between 4 and 8 feet in height. These art quilt portraits are of living artists from the Blackfeet Nation and will be displayed with two pieces of each of portrayed artists’ art works. Honoring the Warhorses of the Blackfeet featured the work of Terrance Guardipee. Guardipee is a celebrated Blackfeet painter and ledger artist. He is renowned for creating a unique contemporary style of art that incorporates the depiction of traditional Blackfeet images. Terrance utilizes antique documents in all of his artwork, dating from the mid-19th century, and typically originating from the historical and present Blackfeet homeland of Montana. The Hockaday Museum of Art is dedicated to providing exhibitions that provide educational opportunities for our audience to learn about the history of Native American Culture.

Intermountain Opera, Bozeman

For our May 2013 production we were able to add what we call our “up-close and personal” section on our website about our guest artists. During a marketing meeting there was talk about how people gravitate to people and that we needed to find personal stories about or from our guest artists that might resonate with our patrons. A new member of the board is a journalist who took on the project of connecting with our guest artists by email and phone and was able to put together some insightful stories on our artists that

we then shared on our website. The story behind one of the guest artists not only built connections with patrons it also caught the attention of the local paper which generated a centerfold story in the entertainment section prior to the opera.

Here is the up-close and personal from the website...

For physicist Philip Judge, a walk with his newly adopted border collie/cur mix, Nellie, on an icy February afternoon brought a stunning epiphany. "I was singing ... because I can't really vocalize in the apartment without being somewhat unpopular with the neighbors," he jokes. "And I realized that I am a baritone, not a bass as I'd always been told." The revelation was exciting for the vocalist who is currently preparing for his role as the Duke of Verona in the upcoming Intermountain Opera production of *Roméo et Juliette*.

"At MSU on a yearlong sabbatical from the National Center for Atmospheric Research in Colorado, Judge has been a singer his whole life. He accepted a choral scholarship from Oxford University in his native England, where he studied physics, and has sung in countless choirs and a number of operas in the decades since. When he researched the professionals engaged for the upcoming opera, Judge remembers being startled. "I thought, 'My God, they've got some pretty good singers.'" And by "pretty good," Judge was quick to point out that he didn't mean "good for the backend of Montana." When the opportunity arose for him to perform in *Roméo et Juliette*, the singer jumped at the chance and is currently training under MSU music professor and Intermountain Opera choral master, Dr. Jon Harney. "The thrill of singing with these people is just everything," he says. "How often am I going to sing with someone from the Met?" Despite two bone marrow transplants within a year a decade ago, Judge is very clear about the biggest obstacle in preparing for his first operatic performance since the 1980s. "Being trained as a choral singer," he says, "is incredibly difficult to get over."

While Judge can wax on about the splendor of opera and the opportunity in Bozeman that doesn't exist elsewhere ("In Boulder, they know me as a physicist and don't think I could possibly be an opera singer as well,") he is not exactly circumspect when it comes to his hopes for *Roméo et Juliette*. "I'm so looking forward to wearing tights," he enthuses. "I'm hoping to get the biggest cod piece because I'm The Duke."

Irwin and Florence Rosten Foundation: MAPS program, Hamilton

As MAPS celebrates its 10th anniversary, we continue to benefit by our local, countywide and statewide profile and reputation. Our communication(s) outreach employs frequent email, Facebook, our website communication(s) etc. NOTE: last year, the MAPS website had at its peak, 60,000 unique visitors.

Perhaps our greatest and most organic relationship builder is via our students and their MAPS experience. They share their enthusiasm and outcomes with family, peers, neighbors et al.

An important component of our outreach is via the media. The *Ravalli Republic* publishes MAPS 'stories' at least once a month. KLYQ radio invites and broadcasts interviews students and teachers on a regular basis. Additionally, some MAPS projects are broadcast via statewide television, specifically the PSA's we produce. And, nothing succeeds like success, and MAPS relationships strengthen by the work our students' produce and the critical reaction it receives. Two recent examples: last year MAPS received four EMMY nominations for its State Farm Insurance PSA's and the documentary "GIVE HOPE".

Finally, MAPS received a grant from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and, to our Knowledge, this was the first grant awarded to a high school program. This honor generated national press including a special edition of *Variety Magazine*. An unexpected outcome...the NYU film school read the *Variety*/MAPS story and is coming this fall to recruit our Ravalli students.

MCT, Missoula

Last year, we made the decision to change our curtain time (starting in FY14) for evening performances (except Sunday evening) to 7:30 from the more traditional 8:00 p.m. This change makes it easier for working people and people with young children to attend our shows.

Last year, we made a decision that will make buying tickets more user-friendly for our constituents. As of October 21, the public will be able to purchase tickets to all five Missoula Community Theatre shows. In other words, though *LES MISERABLES* does not open until April 2014, beginning October 21, people can buy tickets for that show. This change eliminates the need for patrons to keep track of a complex schedule and allows them to buy tickets to the productions they are most interested in at any time that is convenient for them.

Missoula Art Museum (MAM)

Montana Triennial 2012 was the second statewide triennial exhibition produced by MAM. MAM produces a full-color catalog of the Triennial exhibition to showcase the select group of contemporary Montana artists, with an essay by the out-of-state juror who selects the artists for the exhibition, a bio and color reproduction of each artist's work. With each Triennial formal education programs are produced, such as gallery talks, lectures, panel discussions, and demonstrations.

To create a less formal and more prolonged interaction between the featured artists and the audience MAM produced weekly "Artist Point of View Tours" conducted by the exhibiting artists. There were no rules for the artists conducting ours beyond coming prepared to share with audience. We gave the artists permission to focus on their own work, comment on other works in the show, or discuss the exhibition overall. In other words, we encouraged artists to be themselves and have a relaxed interaction with curious art viewers.

Viewers commented that they felt very special to be in such a small audience with the artists. The tours tended to move more slowly than usual, and pause for extended discussion, due to the unrehearsed and somewhat unplanned nature of the tour. Audience members seemed to feel freer to ask questions of the artist tour guide, as compared to trained art guides, demonstrating curiosity of the creative process. This process seems to release a sense of creativity in the viewers themselves, inspiring them to share their own opinions, thoughts, or stories, which is a true sign of success.

Missoula Writing Collaborative

This past year—partly in response to the competent representation students have provided the MWC at public events such as the MT Festival of the Book, our Spring Soiree (our major fundraising event), and school and summer camp readings—we were asked to provide an artistic interlude at the TEDx UMontana program on September 19, 2013. Two young writers, David Bower, age 10, and Elissa Taylor, age 15, read their work with conviction and total confidence, causing the event organizers to comment on the relative calm these readers projected, compared to the (understandable) adult nerves permeating the occasion.

Sunburst Community Foundation, Eureka

During fall 2012, a local scout leader asked if she could use the Sunburst meeting room for her weekly Girl Scout meetings. Gradually we built a relationship between the members of the troop and Sunburst. Her troop helped pick up litter along the Kootenai Rails-to-Trail (a Sunburst project) and handed out programs at some of our concerts. As Sunburst sets up community classes on a regular basis, the scout leader asked about classes that her young girls might enjoy which we arranged. Later the leader taught some classes for us such as 'soap making' and 'lotion making'. When Sunburst began sponsoring Pecha Kucha Nights in Eureka, the troop attended and then asked if they could participate in the following one. It was fantastic! Girls aged 8 - 11 years old did wonderful presentations. The audience was impressed and the girls learned how to do PowerPoint presentations and stand on a stage. Definitely a win-win situation for us all.

Whitefish Theatre Company

Last year, Whitefish Theatre Co. applied for, and received, The Big Read grant from the NEA. During the month of October 2012, Whitefish dedicated itself to a myriad of activities focusing on the book, Fahrenheit 451. For WTC, this grant opened up new ways to build and strengthen connections with other community organizations, schools, and constituents. WTC partnered with Whitefish Community Library, Whitefish Fire Department, Whitefish PTA, Whitefish Senior Center and Whitefish Historical Society to provide activities for all ages. Local businesses-The Village Shop, Montana Coffee Traders, Sweet Peaks Ice Cream, MacKenzie River Pizza, Green Tea House, The Red Room, and Crush Wine Bar- participated in the month long activities, offering sites for book discussions, open houses, a special ice cream flavor, and dinner and drink discounts for patrons.

School and public activities included bringing in speakers from around the country and the state to discuss themes relating to the book, showing movies and performing a play that also related to the themes of the selected novel, Fahrenheit 451.

The Big Read gave WTC a unique opportunity to work with local business and government leadership. By offering a variety of performance genres (theatre, film, literature) and different formats (book discussions, talk-backs, public forums, speakers) WTC was able to connect with its constituents in a new way and it gave community members another way to connect with Whitefish Theatre Co.

The project was an enormous amount of work and responsibility but it was one of the best community building projects we have ever participated in.

Yellowstone Art Museum, Billings

Our technique to connect is to stretch beyond the discipline of art to help everyone see that art is about everything. We recognize that our visitors do not have degrees in art. They bring their interest in creative pursuits & their curiosity. Further, people have different favored modes of learning & engaging. Using these assumptions, the YAM develops interdisciplinary programs to bring people to art by whatever path they are already traveling. We aren't doing this simply by having a cellist play at an opening or an artist do a gallery walk. Instead, we reinforce the show's theme with an array of programs often scheduled back-to-back to create a critical mass of activity. The opening in March of "Insomnia: Works by Michael Zansky" & "Broken Brushes: German Art from the Kaiser to Hitler" is a prime example; planning began a year in advance. In addition to a great gallery talk & Q&A with Zansky, Billings-based dance troupe Terpsichore choreographed

a new work inspired by “Insomnia” & performed it at the opening. The dance was accompanied by recitation of poetry by Rilke & vocal performances of night-themed music & German operatic selections, organized by our colleagues at the Alberta Bair Theater. It was a spectacular evening. Over 300 people shared high enthusiasm for the multi-arts approach. During the exhibits, we also hosted programs presented by art historians, the German art lender, & 2 programs on insomnia & sleep disorders presented by doctors from Billings Clinic. To cap it, we hosted an event called “Up All Night” in which we did exactly that—kept the museum open all night with a schedule packed with night- & dream-inspired films, a presentation of Black Mtn. Paranormal Research group’s findings about the YAM’s building (we received a certificate of haunting), a pajama contest, & similar programs aimed at the night-owl audience who usually finds nothing to do downtown at 2:00 a.m. Up All Night was a success, drawing 300+ people, a handful of whom did stay at the YAM all night. The downside to these intensive interdisciplinary programs is cost: much staff time, additional advertising, and costs to bring in non-local presenters.

None of this replaces our core message about art’s relevance to everyone from the elite to the most disadvantaged, esp. the importance of art education. We tested our observations with a new on-site survey & formal evaluation of the Crow outreach program & “Boundless Visions.” Our findings are similar to those of our colleagues, shared in the collaborative context of Billings Cultural Partners: in formal & informal communications, we encounter a very positive attitude to the YAM, but we also often hear that people have less time & money to participate in cultural activities than they did before 2008. These are not circumstances we can change, but they lead us to emphasize our free programs & extended hours, & our role in creating unexpected programs that stretch our visitors’ notion of what a museum can be.

Return on Investment: Economic Vitality

Alberta Bair Theater, Billings

The Alberta Bair Theater performances and activities directly impact the local economy. Nearly 200,000 attendees and participants attended ABT for performances and programs during this reporting period. Of these, approximately 50,000 were from outside Yellowstone County. In addition to theater admission fees, these individuals spent between \$35- \$55 per person in event-related purchases including retail, dining, and cocktails. Billings also benefited from the money spent by the 9,576 artists performed. Without the Alberta Bair Theater, Yellowstone County residents would be spending entertainment and travel dollars for these experiences in other communities.

The Billings Chamber of Commerce, Big Sky Economic Development Authority, and the Billings Realtor's Association all cite the Alberta Bair Theater as one of the major cultural draws to the community. ABT enhances the quality of life in Billings and is one of the cultural organizations that make this community an attractive relocation site for families, individuals, and businesses. For example, before FedEx selected West Billings for the site of a \$38 million distribution hub, local economic development officials included in their presentation glowing reports of the world-class performances presented by Alberta Bair Theater as part of the rich cultural community that exists in Billings.

In addition, local downtown businesses build ad campaigns around upcoming performances: Broadway Deli, located across the street from the theater, stays open late on the day of an ABT show; The Soup Place offers dinner and wine specials the night of a show to accommodate hungry theater patrons; and the Velvet Cupcake sells performance-themed cupcakes.

Alpine Theatre Project, Whitefish

Alpine Theatre Project continues to boost local economic development through its operations.

First is the natural economic multiplier that comes from its normal operations. ATP estimated that its total economic impact in 2012 was close to \$1.2 Million. This economic generation comes from spending roughly 70% of its production supplies budget locally. It also comes from the expenditures of its employees. While most of ATP's artists come from out of state, their spending habits are comparable to a local tourist. They are spending their ATP paychecks on local items like groceries and other essentials. They're also spending on tourism based goods and services like Glacier Park passes, lift tickets at Whitefish Mountain Resort, bike and kayak rentals, sporting goods, and souvenirs.

The performing arts are the unexpected gem in Montana's tourism and relocation plans. ATP's artistic offerings have proven to be the deciding factor in a tourist's decision to stay in the area an extra day and night. Also, local culture continues to be the number three reason for relocation to an area. Because of this fact, the Whitefish Convention & Visitors Bureau, the Whitefish Chamber of Commerce, the Flathead Convention and Visitors Bureau, Montana West Economic Development, and other local businesses like North Valley Hospital mention Alpine Theatre Project when describing the various amenities in the Flathead Valley.

Archie Bray Foundation, Helena

The Archie Bray Foundation (the Bray) has a significant economic and cultural impact on the local community of Helena and the state of Montana. The largest item in the Bray budget is salaries and benefits which are spent in Helena and have a multiplying effect on the city's economy. Other expenses including utilities, printing and design, building maintenance and materials are spent primarily within the state. The Bray brings artists from around the world to work and live in Helena. Their art work is sold in galleries throughout the country, thereby importing capital into the state. The Bray also hosts exhibitions in different cities in the U.S. that generate income spent in Montana. As an internationally-recognized art center, the Bray is featured in different publications as a travel destination. In an article written by Matt Volz in June, the Bray was listed among five free things to do in Helena, MT. Since then the article has run in various newspapers across the U.S. including the Huffington Post and ABC News.

Due to its national visibility, the Bray draws a significant number of visitors from around the world who patronize restaurants and hotels and visit other local attractions. Helena is supportive of the arts and the presence of the Bray, along with the strength of the arts community, draws ceramic artists to purchase houses and studio spaces and make their homes Helena and the surrounding area. Each artist who makes this move further expands the benefit of the arts to the state's economy.

The Bray is currently working with Patrick Barkey, director of the Bureau of Business and Economic Research at The University of Montana, to finalize an Economic Impact study. A summary of the findings states that based upon a comparison of the baseline economy to levels of economic activity that would occur if Archie Bray Foundation did not exist, the Montana economy is larger, more prosperous and more populous due to the Bray's operations. The impacts recur year after year, growing substantially larger in years when special events—such as the 60-year anniversary event held in 2011—take place. Specifically, the report states that on an ongoing basis the Montana economy is larger by:

- 26 year-round jobs, of which 23 are private sector jobs, spread across a wide spectrum of industries and occupations, predominantly in the Helena area.
- More than \$1.4 million in annual income received collectively by Montana households, of which about
- \$1.2 million is after-tax income available for household spending;
- 36 people, including workers and families who relocate, attracted by job opportunities; and
- More than \$2.8 million in annual sales realized by Montana businesses.

According the Barkey, this is a "remarkable result" for an organization that has a \$1.2 million annual budget. As this report details, different facets of the Bray' operations, particularly those which draw nonresident visitors to auctions and events, combine to realize this effect.

Big Sky Film Festival, Missoula

This year the Missoula tourism agency, Destination Missoula, calculated that the Tenth Anniversary Big Sky Documentary Film Festival (BSDFF) had a \$2.9M financial impact on Missoula's economy. For 10 days in February, BSDFF lights up downtown Missoula, bringing over 20,000 film-goers to downtown theatres, restaurants, art galleries, and Missoula's small businesses during the slowest time of the retail year. Because of this recognition of the festival's economic importance to Missoula and Western Montana, the Big Sky Film Institute was highlighted in the new economic development campaign undertaken by the city, "Bring It On Home," encouraging industries to site their next conference and business meeting in Missoula. As an arts organization, it was very special to be recognized as an engine of the local economy.

This year marked the first year that the Big Sky Film Institute partnered with the local tourism board and received seed money to support a regional marketing initiative designed to build the festival audience by targeting prospective attendees from regional markets like Spokane, Seattle, Portland, Boise, and Calgary. The outside-Missoula festival audience grew by 15%, which can be attributed to this community partnership. Additionally, approximately half of our annual budget is spent locally; with \$8,000 to local hotels, \$10,000 to local caterers and provisioners, \$20,000 to local venues, and the remainder going to local entertainers and artists, and local advertising/marketing vendors.

CoMotion Dance, Missoula

Children are natural movers and they readily learn through activities that encourage them to use their whole bodies in the pursuit of knowledge. Developed as an alternative to keeping students in their seats throughout the school day, The CoMotion Dance Project creates opportunities for professional dancers to visit classrooms, push the desks aside and physically engage students in the curriculum. Now beginning its sixth year, hundreds of elementary students in Western Montana are dancing states of water and the plant cycle (science); place value, percentages and decimals (math); grammar and poetry (language arts). After being presented with new curricular content in the traditional manner, the specially designed dance units are used to support and deepen student knowledge, leading to greater retention and long-term understanding.

The work we've been doing in dance integration at the elementary level has led to a contract to publish a textbook. Dance Integration Teaching Science and Mathematics will be released June 15, 2014 by Human Kinetics Publishers. It is the direct result of our experiences teaching dance in Montana schools. High school students learn expressive movement and choreography in their drama classes, in performance-based programs. Each school holds public performances of students' original choreography, showcasing their learning.

Teachers are gaining innovative techniques for engaging students in the curriculum and are recognizing the excitement and engagement their students show for learning through dance. Our principals and teachers report that the school dance programs enhance student achievement across the curriculum, and that is being reflected in higher test scores. Individual schools and the Montana Arts Council, Artist in Schools Program support this program.

We believe that when children and youth are exposed to the art form of dance—with an approach that is thoughtfully designed to increase literacy as viewers as well as participants, that it builds future audiences for dance. Since most children in Montana have few opportunities to view live dance, our work is extremely important. There is no stronger return on investment than to contribute to students' academic achievement and develop literate arts audiences! Exposure leads to appreciation, which leads to involvement and support.

The CoMotion Dance Project is the primary organization in Montana advocating for dance in the schools. Our work in schools has proven that children are learning through kinesthetic teaching techniques and schools are eager to discover new forms of delivery. We are providing unique opportunities for the arts to contribute to education, providing new ways of thinking, learning and reflecting knowledge.

Fort Peck Fine Arts Council

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans is a faith-based, not-for-profit membership organization whose mission is to help members be wise with money and inspire them to live generous lives. Through their chapters and other resources, members reach out and strengthen Christian communities and congregations that they care about, across the nation. One way they do this is to host social events to bring members together to have fun and to support activities they value. The Glasgow chapter serves much of northeastern Montana and has chosen to be a sponsor of the Fort Peck Summer Theatre for the past two seasons. Sponsorship means that in exchange for a \$1,500 gift to the Theatre the organization receives 50 tickets to be used for any show and 50 tickets to be used for a night of their choice called their sponsor night. In 2013 Thrivent chose to sponsor a Sunday afternoon performance of Music Man. They planned a social event in Fort Peck that included recommended sites of the area, a ticket to the Theatre, and a pulled pork dinner with all the trimmings, provided by the Fort Peck Lutheran Church community. For hosting the dinner the local Thrivent Chapter gave the Church \$250 which was matched by the corporate office bringing \$500 into this small church community plus the \$1,864 given through a free will offering. The money raised this one day is enough to keep this small church open for the year and according to the church secretary they hope to make it an annual event. Over 200 people attended the Theatre that day as guests of Thrivent. They came from Plentywood, Richie, Scobey, Wolf Point, Hinsdale, Culbertson, Circle, Opheim, Glasgow, with 50 on a charter bus from Sidney. In addition to their sponsor tickets Thrivent purchased 100 additional tickets for the performance that day.

The Fort Peck Fine Arts Council is proud to be an organization that many communities in a large geographic area not only value but support through their long distance participation and generous gifts. Furthermore the Council is pleased to be part of a larger network of organizations such as Thrivent Financial whereby working together we can improve the quality of life for all.

Glacier Symphony, Kalispell

In March of 2013, the Glacier Symphony and Chorale (GSC) initiated a study funded by Northwest Energy and undertaken by Solution Mountain of Bozeman to understand further the economic impact that the GSC has in the local economy.

We were pleasantly surprised to find that the study found that the GSC has an economic impact of \$1.27 million dollars locally and impacts 51 jobs. While a modest expense of budget of \$650,000 is put to work by the GSC, the multiplicative impact to the economy and jobs is impressive. Our board of directors were proud to see that by raising private funds and selling tickets to concerts, those dollars were pumped back into the local economy and impacted more jobs and people than we imagined.

Some of our major expense budget items are:

- Personnel and Salaries \$397,783
- Equipment Rental \$10,961
- Design, Printing, and Advertising \$52,254
- Rent \$17,272

A good specific example of how one of our expense items helped another local business leverage themselves was the collaboration between the Glacier Symphony and Chorale and the Whitefish Chamber of Commerce to commit to 5 weekends of use of a new performance tent that was purchased by Celebrate Rentals (over \$60,000). By the commitment of our organizations to rent the tent at a pre-arranged price,

Celebrate was able to commit to the capital investment of purchasing the tent. Now the Flathead Valley has access to a world-class performance tent that is available for rent, that would not have been otherwise. It has helped Celebrate Rentals serve this important market with a new product that they would not have been able to afford without the collaborative efforts.

Celebrate Rentals is now a major corporate sponsor of the Glacier Symphony and Chorale because of this effort to work on a project that was mutually beneficial to the two organizations.

Great Falls Symphony

The Great Falls Symphony takes its role as a “player” in the economy very seriously. With a current artistic and administrative staff of 16 people through job creation and salaries alone the GFSA returns over \$350,000 to the local and state economy, and over \$50,000 in state and federal taxes and benefits. In addition, the organization returns an additional \$25,000 to the community through per-service honorariums for our 50 community musicians. Add to this the Symphony’s purchase of local goods and services and the impact of ticket holders from rural areas who contribute to local restaurants and hotels after a Saturday Night at the Symphony and one can see significant impact. Estimating a conservative multiplier effect of .4 (point 4) as the dollars turn over in the community, we begin to see what even a relatively small regional arts organization can contribute.

Recognizing the cultural resources of a community are often a significant factor when people make a decision to live and work in that community, the Symphony works closely with such entities as the Great Falls Economic Development Authority, the Chamber of Commerce, City of Great Falls, the Military Affairs Committee and large employers including Davidson Companies, Benefis Health System, the Public School system and others who are active recruiters to the region. When appropriate, representatives from these entities are invited to sit on our Board of Directors. We are told that during the employee recruitment process, the livability of the community including a rich arts environment factors highly on the list of top qualities considered as potential employees evaluate their options.

Hockaday Museum of Art, Kalispell

Each year the Hockaday Museum of Art proudly presents the Annual Arts in the Park festival. Arts in the Park is the Flathead Valley’s premiere arts, crafts, and music festival held in Kalispell’s historic downtown Depot Park. Over 100 local and visiting artists and craftsmen offer their unique and quality works for sale. Food and beverage vendors from around the valley provide delicious treats, and the Crown of the Continent Guitar Foundation provides live musical entertainment. While Arts in the Park is a benefit event for the Hockaday Museum of Art the festival provides also provides income for the artists, vendors and musicians who participate in the annual event. The attendance for 2013 was close to 8,000 people over three days. The downtown corridor of stores, restaurants and hotels all benefited from the additional traffic.

We submitted a survey to the 101 participating artists. Forty-six surveys were returned indicating a total of \$79,357 in sales for the duration of the festival. AIP sponsors for 2013 included the Daily Interlake, Kalispell Toyota, and BNSF. The partnerships enable the Museum to do more advertising and increase the benefit to the entire community.

The MAC funds the Museum receives are used as an example when we talk to other funding sources. When the businesses were approached to sponsor Arts in the Park, they ask, "Who are the other organizations that support you?" We can say the Montana Arts Council believes we are one of the hardest working non-profits in the state and that we provide 25% of museum art education outside the school system. In this instance we were able to secure \$5,000 in cash and \$18,000 in free advertising. Our association with the Montana Arts Council definitely elevates our credibility with potential funders.

MCT, Missoula

We estimate that approximately 70% of our \$5.5 million budget is spent locally in Missoula.

Thanks in part to MAC funding, we are able to keep the residency fee lower in Montana than elsewhere. That the fee is reasonable makes fundraising for the program doable and within reach for most of the small schools/arts organizations that bring MCT to town.

Missoula Cultural Council

In the spring of 2012 Americans for the Arts released Arts and Economic Prosperity IV: the Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts Organizations and their Audiences. As with the previous three studies, MCC coordinated the Missoula information, and was the lone Montana community to join the other 182 groups nationally in this study. According to the latest results, Missoula's nonprofit arts organizations constitute a \$39.9 million industry, providing 1455 FTE jobs, \$30 million in household income, and \$3.3 million in state and local revenue. These numbers are comparable with those of Boise, Tacoma, and Eugene, cities far larger. In addition, the implications for cultural tourism are significant as well. Tourists spend an average of \$52 (not including admission) in arts related spending, such as restaurants, hotels, transportation, compared to the national average of \$40. The full study can be found at <http://www.missoulacultural.org/2012ArtsandProsperityReportforMissoula.pdf>. This study was highlighted in the *Missoulian* on June 30: [:"Nonprofit arts, culture bring \\$39M to Missoula"](#) and in an editorial on July 8: ["Study confirms art has big impact."](#) This study and the publicity around it fueled a continued interest in the connection between art and our local economic health throughout the year. Randy Cohen of Americans for the Arts visited Missoula in late September to discuss this study and its implications. The arts community now seems ready to leverage this study for continued community discussion planning for Missoula's future. In contrast with previous public opinion about the relationship between art and the economy, people now seem to understand the connection. According to Larry Swanson, economist and director of O'Connor Center for the Rocky Mountain West, "Arts is the key for Missoula economically."

Missoula Writing Collaborative

The MWC employs 10-12 professional writers each year to teach in area schools. Many of these writers received MFA degrees from the University of Montana creative writing program. In recent years we have added four paid internships, employing current university students to assist in our classrooms and learn the skill of teaching creative writing to children. In many cases this career chance has convinced UM graduates to stay in Missoula, rather than seeking opportunities out of state.

Some have developed their own, related programs that complement the work of the MWC. An example of this is Nica-Arts, an artist-in-the-schools program in Nicaragua that was started through Missoula Writing

Collaborative mentoring of a project created by a MWC writer during a two-year Fulbright study program. As a result of this relationship, last spring students at Russell Elementary school in Missoula were able to exchange poetry via a Skype video exchange with students from El Castillo, a remote village in Nicaragua. (Students from El Castillo took a boat up river to San Carlo to find an internet connection.) This kind of collaboration makes the world wider for kids in Missoula who might not otherwise have the opportunity to travel, and belies any perceptions of western Montana as a backwater area with no international connections. Even if an exchange of bi-lingual poetry between school kids seems like a small event, these kinds of multicultural collaborations undoubtedly enhance the chances of this area to be viewed as a potential economic partner in global initiatives.

Yellowstone Art Museum, Billings

In addition to the economic impact of being one of MT's largest cultural organizations & the flagship contemporary art museum, our elected officials, business leaders, & private citizens communicate the value they place on our institution by bringing here those they wish to impress. The Yellowstone County Commissioners are particularly active in ensuring that visiting dignitaries visit the YAM. As Billings experiences ripple-effect from the Bakken oil boom, cultural facilities like the YAM embody a quality of life that cannot be met in a boom town; families live here while wage-earners commute to the oil field. Families need the schools & cultural array that Billings uniquely offers in our state. Other stories of economic influence include our exhibition of experimental architectural drawings emphasizing sustainable building strategies, which were used by a local developer to improve housing designs in his developments (Oakland Companies). Billings Clinic includes the YAM in its professional recruitment efforts, & succeeds in hiring top professionals who contribute to the medical facility's own high national rating. The YAM's leading role improves the state's reputation among our national peers; our publicly accessible Visible Vault has been noted as the single finest open storage space ever seen by peers & international travelers.

Return on Investment: Impact on People's Lives

Alberta Bair Theater, Billings

The US Army Field Band and Soldier Chorus performed to a full house at the Alberta Bair Theater on October 19, 2012. This free concert featured the Soldiers' Chorus - a 29-member mixed choral ensemble that travels throughout the nation and abroad, performing as a separate component and in joint concerts with the Concert Band of the "Musical Ambassadors of the Army." The versatile chorus has performed in all fifty states, Canada, Mexico, India, the Far East, and throughout Europe, entertaining audiences of all ages and has earned an international reputation for presenting musical excellence and inspiring patriotism.

To one veteran in Billings, a wheelchair-bound octogenarian, seeing the US Army Field Band and Soldier Chorus in Billings was at the top of his bucket list. However, his failing health and a forecast of snow concerned the veteran's family enough that they decided it would be better to stay home. Proving that music really does have the power to heal, the ailing veteran rallied in the late afternoon the day of the concert and insisted that his daughter call the Alberta Bair Theater and check on ticket availability. Even though the 1,400-seat venue was nearly filled up, a wheelchair station and companion seat were made available.

ABT staff who greeted the veteran and his daughter said the old gentleman was rolled into the lobby just moments before the concert began. He had a broad smile and tears streaming down his face. The joy of past victories, the anguish of war, and bittersweet nostalgia played across his face. It was evident to anyone around him that this old soldier always honored his marching orders.

Alpine Theatre Project, Whitefish

ATP continues to witness incredible events where theatre can literally change kids' lives. This summer, as part of its "Broadway Master Class" series, twelve students participated in the Classic Musical Theatre class, where they were able to work with actors who have performed in a combined 8 Broadway productions.

Within this class was Matthew Hutchinson, a high school student living with Autism and other learning disabilities. Matthew's enrollment in this program was initially debated since the class was geared toward more advanced acting and singing students. However, as is ATP's policy, all students are accepted regardless of ability.

Each student was required to prepare a song from a Broadway musical written before 1968. Matthew prepared "Edelweiss" from The Sound of Music. During three class sessions, Matthew worked on this song with the 5 Broadway actors/teachers. None of them were able to make any progress on the song, given Matthew's reluctance to sing out. On the final class day, each student was required to perform his or her song in front of the class. Matthew was selected to work with Broadway actor, Kevin Vortmann, and sing "Edelweiss" in front of the class. Once again, Matthew closed up.

Kevin decided to take a different approach, and show Matthew that sometimes magical performance moments come not from the individual performer, but from what the individual performer can do to and audience. He asked Matthew to sing the first verse of "Edelweiss," but then asked all the other students and teachers in the theatre to join him on the second verse if they felt moved to sing with him based on the power of his performance of the first verse.

When the entire room began singing with Matthew on the second verse, his face lit up into a giant smile. Everyone continued singing together, tears streaming down cheeks. After it over, Kevin turned to Matthew

and said, "Performance is a shared experience. It's not just a one-way street. Look at what you did. You moved everyone here to sing along with you. You did that."

It was a truly magical event that showed just how powerful performance can be.

Archie Bray Foundation, Helena

Volunteer and class participant Gregg Edelen first came to the Bray in 1995. Gregg's son was showing promise as a potter and had received a Bray community class as a gift from a teacher to encourage his skills. A few weeks after classes started he was in a car accident and couldn't drive, so Gregg offered to drive him the 140 mile round trip to the Bray from Butte each week. While his son was in the three hour class, Gregg quickly ran out of things to do in Helena so he started to hang out in the class and even made a few small pieces. Seeing that the Bray grounds needed some attention, Gregg offered to take care of some weedy patches as well as mow the lawns. He continued to drive from Butte to mow the lawns for over six years.

Gregg was interested in clay after his experience in his son's class, so he started to take classes. Since then, clay has become a passion for him. Gregg loves the Bray community and enjoys meeting people from all over the world and being taught by the resident artists. Wistfully, he wishes he would have found clay 40 years ago. As much as he enjoys working with clay, it is truly the people he connects with that keep him coming back to the Bray to take classes.

Gregg comes to the Bray for the people. He loves the sharing that goes on between the residents and community students. As a beginner he was helped by the different resident artists, working through challenges and building his skills. Now he shares what he has learned to help others. He has been taking classes for over a decade and has had the wonderful experience of helping fellow students with challenges and watching them progress. Gregg is now bringing pottery to Butte by instructing adult community classes in beginning and intermediate pottery. He has 25-30 students over a six-week period, and encourages student to bring their kids ages 8-12 to come and make pinch pots and animals. "The Bray has totally changed my life," Gregg says. Making ceramics and coming out to the Bray are things he will do for the rest of his life.

Gregg thinks of the Bray as his second home, and talks about "...when the Bray came home to me." His mother had passed away and he traveled to Texas for the funeral and to clean out and sell her house. After everything was taken care of he had been away from the Bray for about six weeks. When he returned from Texas he found stacks of condolence cards which he sorted through and dutifully wrote thank you notes. In addition to the cards, there was one large brown envelope with no return address. Assuming it was something else he pushed it aside and ignored it until his wife pressed him to open it. Instead of the junk mail he expected, he was surprised to find it was a hand drawn card from the Bray. About 30 people had signed the card, and several had written that it was from "your Bray family". Gregg was touched by the personal card and that so many had gathered to sign it. He says it really brought the Bray to his heart.

Bigfork Playhouse Children's Theatre, Bigfork

I have a young man that has been running my lights for about 4 years. He is a real good kid, but very specific and precise. After a couple shows, he was able to 'go with the flow' and fix problems on the fly. Right now, he can program lights and fix problems right as they occur, program the light board, change lamps and gels without any problems. I always expected the most from this young man.

A year ago he auditioned to be in the show - not just to light it. I cast him in a speaking role and he did a very nice job. On Opening Night his mother came up to me, with tears in her eyes, and said she thought she'd never see her son do anything like this. I asked why, and said he was doing fine. She replied "He's autistic. This program has changed his ability to cope. Thank you!"

Bozeman Symphony

Each July 4th we partner with the Gallatin Empire Lions Club to provide the Gallatin Valley with the Festival of the Fourth Community Celebration. We begin the evening with an All-American barbeque, followed by an outside, free to concert attendees, Bozeman Symphony concert which leads into a state of the art Free fireworks display. Approximately 4000 south-central Montana children and adults enjoy the patriotic, educational and entertaining evening. This family friendly evening is an extraordinary way to pull the community and surrounding communities together to celebrate our nation's birthday. The audience leaves the Gallatin Valley Fairgrounds in anticipation for the next Festival of the Fourth. The event is quickly becoming a Bozeman tradition with many families attending and looking forward to the next one.

Out of town guests of two of our supporters, Carolyn and Terry Ketchel of Shalimar, Florida said, "We were fortunate to spend the Fourth of July in Bozeman. We arrived on the third as guests of Barbara and Norm Lloyd. We found the Museum of the Rockies to be informative, educational and a real gem from the dinosaurs to the planetarium. Next we traveled into beautiful Gallatin National Forest and hiked to Palisades Falls. The climb was rewarded by the spectacular cascading water flowing over the mountain. On the evening of the celebration of the birth of our great nation we attended the performance of the symphony orchestra at the county fairgrounds. The selection of music honored our American composers and the conductor and the musicians are to be commended for their first rate production. The firework display was the grand finale and one of the best we have ever witnessed. Thank you Bozeman for one of the most memorable Independence Day Celebrations which we will long cherish! God Bless America and God Bless Bozeman."

Butte Symphony

The most touching story of the impact of the orchestra on someone is from one of our more senior players. Pete Godtland has been with the orchestra since its inception in 1950. Pete is 88 years old and found true delight in playing music with the Butte Symphony. Pete is at every rehearsal along with his wife and is one of 4 members of the orchestra that are over 80 years old. He has seen the orchestra go from a small orchestra to a full scale symphony. He walks in, a slow deliberate walk, sits down and does magic with his french horn. "This is an activity you can do all your life. It is part of my life."

This is how important this bit of Montana is. For 64 years the Butte Symphony has provided an opportunity for Pete and others to use the skill they have learned to paint pictures on the canvas of silence. This year Pete was chosen to ride in the Grand Marshall car of the 4th of July Parade. The entire community of Butte stood out to greet him and there were tears in his eyes.

CoMotion Dance, Missoula

From dance educator Emily Feller (Bigfork DTA): There have been countless numbers of students who talk about how they wish they could dance everyday! I'm sure that it has to do with something different, and a

new way to learn, but I really believed it after I was stopped by a parent. She told me that her son had been coming home and talking about dance in school. She was a little confused and assumed it was a gym class teaching something, until she probed him a little further. After learning what it was exactly that he learned in dance class, she made it a point to come and observe a class. After watching the class she pulled me aside and congratulated me, and Bigfork Elementary, for exposing her son to a new way to learn. He is a slower learner in some areas (we were currently working on sentence structure, but I'm not sure if she was specifically talking about this), and that he was understanding the concepts much better since dance had started with him.

This was told by Joe Pitts last year about the MoDE program:

The 5th graders at Bigfork Elementary were preparing to take the CRT tests for the state of Montana, and the teachers knew of several weak areas as the material simply hadn't been covered. With the help of our MoDE dance class, we were able to touch on new concepts in geometry that the students hadn't learned. These concepts were on the test, and because of the teachings in our dance class our students were able to succeed.

Emerson Cultural Center, Bozeman

The Emerson has hosted the Garden and Home tour for the last 16 years in the Gallatin Valley. This year in conjunction with the tour we did a call to artists for a garden related exhibit. The response was amazing and the subsequent exhibit was stunning. Well known and emerging artists' work were displayed side by side in a professionally curated exhibit. There was an overwhelming show of positive community support for the show. On the opening night of the exhibit Jess Jordan - an emerging artist whose work was accepted for the "Garden View" exhibit expressed her thanks to our staff for allowing her to be in the show - as Ms. Jordan was expressing her gratitude her voice choked with emotion. She went on to express how thrilled she was to have her work on exhibit at the Emerson, how she had invited all of her friends and family to come see her work and above all how her inclusion in the show had inspired her to refocus her efforts on her work.

While this is the story of only one of the artists in this show, I believe that it brings home the importance that inclusion in the ARTS community should be open to everyone. By opening our galleries to established AND emerging artists we make greater strides to fulfill our mission to build community by promoting art and culture, set in a historic building.

Fort Peck Fine Arts Council

The Fort Peck Theatre family lost a wonderful staff member, volunteer and friend when Karston Waarvik was killed in an auto accident in the summer of 2012. Karston's contribution to the Fort Peck Theatre has been memorialized in The Fort Peck Performing Arts Camp Scholarship endowed in his name by his mother Karen.

Karen Waarvik, recognizing that family finances often deny children the opportunity to participate in the theatre training and experience, framed the criteria for Karston's scholarship to bring that opportunity to a broader circle of children. Teachers in Valley County schools are asked to recommend students who they view as having the most potential to benefit from the training, social experience and camaraderie which the Camp provides. Five referrals were made in 2013 and all received scholarships.

One such student, a 2nd grader, living with her single mother, struggled socially in school with a minor learning disability. She was not a good student and was lacking in self-confidence. At a loss as to how to socially interact she spent most of her time alone. Her teacher, imagining how the Waarvik Camp scholarship might be just what she needed, made the referral. She made a remarkable transformation during the two week camp, discovered how creative she could be, and how much fun it was to participate. This little girl made friends at Camp and for the first time she was in a situation where she could succeed and learned the value of putting effort into a project to obtain positive results. All of a sudden she had a level of self-esteem. My memory of this summer is dominated by that young girl's transformation. Over and over again she would say "Thank You!" and "This has been the best two weeks of my life" and "I love the theatre and camp and want to come back next year." She began to radiate self-esteem which she had never experienced before.

Her mother beamed with the realization the Camp scholarship had changed her daughter's life. She couldn't be more proud telling every one of the wonderful experience and that her daughter has a new commitment to work harder at everything. "My daughter's an actress now."

Glacier Symphony, Kalispell

As a GSC Board member and because I so enjoy GSC concerts myself, I invited a colleague from work to sit with me at one of our Master Series concerts, and gave her a ticket. When she explained that she had been shy about attending concerts in the past because she knew very little about classical music, I suggested we go to the pre-concert lecture. She LOVED it! Not only did the insights from the Maestro bring the music alive for her, her post-lecture conversations with two GSC musicians helped her understand her personal importance as a member of the audience. Since then, my colleague has introduced several friends to the GSC and purchased tickets to individual concerts. This summer she organized a carload of first-timers for the Pops Concert at Rebecca Farms and was delighted to inform me that some of them decided to check out the Amadeus Festival! In a small community like ours, the friendly accessibility of our musicians matters greatly. We love feeling connected and important to our Symphony - it makes the music all the more beautiful.

Great Falls Symphony

Our Youth Orchestra musicians and their parents we hear many stories that touch us. The goal of the Great Falls Symphony Youth Orchestra is not simply to perfect performance, but rather to teach life skills through music, and give talented young people the opportunity to develop qualities of responsibility, dedication, discipline and teamwork as demonstrated in the orchestra and life. In this economic climate we still find many deserving young people for whom the experience can be life changing, but their family circumstances just cannot provide for their participation. For that reason the GFSA with assistance from corporate partners offer a number of tuition waivers and private study scholarships. We provide tickets so that students may attend concerts presented by the Great Falls Symphony which for some, to experience live symphonic music and observe musicians in the orchestra as role models is a first! During the Youth Orchestra application process we learn a great deal about how the students and their parents/guardians perceive the value of their involvement. One student, whose father was recently deployed with 3 siblings and a Mom left at home, said "music is such an important part of my life, I can't imagine not being in the orchestra with other kids who care about music, too." Another student who lives with grandparents wrote, "I am applying for a fee waiver because music is important to me... even more when finances are tough. My

grandparents work 5 jobs, and we still just scrape by... for me to be able to continue in the Youth Orchestra, would be amazing!" Another parent applying for a fee waiver for twin boys who both participate said, "Thank you for offering this opportunity for my sons. Youth Orchestra plays such an important role in molding my children into successful students and adults."

Hamilton Players

The Hamilton Players Youth Theater Program touches hundreds of lives each year, creating stronger community members by developing and encouraging self-confidence, self-esteem, and social skills. One such story is exemplified by the following letter, received from a youth theater school participant's parent:

Dear Hamilton Players,

Today I had the great joy of accompanying my daughter to a school function. Normally she doesn't like to go to these things like but was insistent that today we go. So of course I jumped at the chance to take her. Once inside I was met by one of her teachers who pulled me aside and wanted to tell me how much Molly had changed over the course of the year. They couldn't believe how this once painfully shy girl could have bloomed into this talkative, confident young girl. One of her other teachers then joined our conversation and told us that she had seen Molly in her play and how blown away she was by the fact that Molly was not only standing up on that stage, but was really good at what she was doing. I wanted to take a moment to share this story with you because as a parent hearing such things is so wonderful that you want to share them with them people who helped make them possible. Molly auditioned for a play at the Playhouse two years ago and had trouble standing on the stage, but Denise Rose cast her in the chorus. This year she auditioned for another play, and stood up on that stage without any fear and was cast in one of the lead roles. I am very confident when I say that had she not been given the chance to stand up on the stage two years ago, she never would have auditioned for another play, or had the confidence she does now in her classroom.

Thank you! You provide an invaluable service to the community.

Nicole Adamson

Hockaday Museum of Art, Kalispell

The 5 mile walk...

In June of this year the Smith Valley School scheduled a visit to the Hockaday Museum of Art so that students could see the Museum's exhibits and Honoring the Warhorses of the Blackfeet Terrance Guardipee's and Cheryl Ferrin's Blackfeet Portraits exhibits. Teacher, Elise Klohe, was able to arrange a bus ride, but a return ride to the school was unavailable. She talked with the children and all agreed they wanted to go even if they had to walk home. The 7th grade students will be telling their children is this wonderful story.

According to one of the students, "This is the best field trip we have ever been on. I wouldn't care if we had to walk twice as far to get back home." Another student was particularly impressed by Denise Ferrin's quilted portraits. "My grandmother quilts, but it is nothing like this. I have a whole new appreciation for quilting." "It is really important that kids have opportunities to see things like this museum exhibit", Teacher Elise Klohe commented. We had a difficult time with the bus situation to make it work, but decided

it was what we needed to do. Even with the threat of rain, the students were still willing to walk the 5 miles back to school.”

That is a determination! And a wonderful tribute to the Hockaday Museum of Art’s educational programming that the teacher and the students decided the visit was worth the inconvenience of a long trek home.

Montana Museum for Art and Culture, Missoula

We received gift funds from a donor in Michigan to reframe 82 pieces of art at once ahead of a special exhibition in our galleries. We took the job to several frame shops for estimates. The job was to be a major effort to help secure and preserve a major collection of artworks that are part of our Permanent Collection. We received three estimates and awarded the job to the vendor we knew would give us the best work for the best price. We were aware it was to be a nearly \$10,000 investment. The frame shop which took on the job was experiencing a lull in their business. When they received our order for the 82 frames and mattes they did the work efficiently and expertly. We were extremely satisfied with the quality of this work. The owner of the frame shop told us that their business was in serious jeopardy before our major order arose and that our order basically saved the business at a dire time. We were thrilled to know that a hard working Montana sole proprietor benefited so much for our work and we recognized our symbiotic relationship as a nonprofit business with the for-profit business they run.

Montana Shakespeare in the Parks

“It means quite a bit to me to have Shakespeare in the Parks in my community. It has led me to choose the profession I have, Theatre, and to pursue my dreams. It has meant the world to me and I can only hope someday I might be employed by them to share my love of Shakespeare that I gained through seeing them perform every summer.”

- Roundup, MT

Many young people have grown up watching MSIP perform in their local city parks. Some of them are so inspired by MSIP, that they choose acting for their own profession and become professional actors. One such young lady, from Dillon, MT, is auditioning for MSIP the very evening of this grant report. As she stated in her introductory email, “I grew up in Dillon, MT, and Montana Shakespeare was a highlight of my summers as a child and young adult. Having the opportunity to experience professional theater of that caliber in my small town played a role in my decision to pursue a degree and career in the arts.” Stories like this are legion, and inspire MSIP to continue to dedicate itself to providing free professional theatre to Montanans no matter how far they are from the nearest urban center.

Southwest Montana Arts Council, Dillon

Before becoming the executive director of our arts council, I worked at the elementary school with special ed and at-risk youth, so I was involved with an artist residency at the school. One of my kiddos comes from a family with a variety of problems, not the least of which is one child with autism and one with severe anger issues. This particular kid was too young to start kindergarten but was allowed because his mother was convicted of selling drugs in the home and his grandmother and current guardian is not much of a

caregiver. In other words, this kid has a lot of bad stuff going on in his life. He was a challenge for me nearly every day, whether it was removing him from the classroom for acting out or chasing him down on the playground for refusing to come in after recess. But every day, I picked him up in a bear hug the first time I saw him and told him “It’s a great day to be in school!” Responses ranged from eyerolls to “whatever”s. Later in the spring, SMAC brought On Ensemble to the elementary school for a residency. My little kiddo was one of several children who got picked to go up on stage to perform on a taiko drum. He was ecstatic. He’d been on his best behavior all day just to attend the event. When the performer put sticks in his hands, he vibrated with excitement. He followed directions and did a wonderful job performing, but he couldn’t quite resist the urge to be himself. After the performer gave the kids the cue to stop playing, my kiddo busted out a solo that reverberated through the whole gym and earned him a standing ovation from his peers, teachers and the performers of On Ensemble. He glowed with delight as he gently set down his sticks and returned to his seat.

As I was helping kids line up for the bus, he grabbed my leg in a bear hug and said “It’s a great day to be in school, Ms. Mandy!”

I can’t say his behavior was perfect for the rest of the school year, but I saw a marked difference. We made a “taiko drum” for him to play as a reward for good behavior. Had it not been for the Southwest Montana Arts Council’s dedication to bringing innovative arts programming to our community and particularly our schools, this kiddo may have never seen, let alone played, a taiko drum.

Stumptown Art Studio, Whitefish

Stumptown Art Studio’s Art from the Heart program was developed with the goal of reaching out to the underserved members of our community. For several years we have worked with a 33 year old gentleman named Ben Holman.

Here is a letter from Ben’s mother, Carla:

“Ben had a rare seizure disorder as an infant that resulted in Autism. He received special education throughout his school years; since leaving school, he has been able to work at a part-time job in the community. Participating in art classes at Stumptown Art Studio for the past several years has enriched Ben’s life by providing structured activities that require planning and completion, giving him the mental exercise that goes with that. Ben’s communication is often limited to certain specific subjects that interest him and that subject matter may or may not lend itself to conversations with others. His art experiences have given him a new venue for conversation that other people can often relate to. He enjoys showing his art work and that has encouraged him to converse with friends and new acquaintances. (A couple of years ago, without his family’s knowledge, Ben packed several pieces of art in his suitcase for a weekend trip, to show family friends in Missoula.) Being part of art walks and shows through SAS has given Ben community integration because he’s a disabled person participating in an activity that a non-disabled person might participate in. Ben’s art has given him chances to try new things; it has provided something to anticipate and look forward to; he seems proud of his accomplishments with art; and it genuinely makes him happy.”

Each month we send an art instructor equipped with a variety of supplies to a fully accessible group home in nearby Kalispell. Eight adults with disabilities live in this home. This year we entered a variety of their art work in the Flathead County Fair. Most earned blue ribbons, and all were viewed by thousands of residents. At her last visit to the home, our art instructor was greeted with hugs and smiles by her students, who wore their ribbons proudly and were eager to begin their next art project. These are the stories that reflect the impact of the arts on people’s lives.

VSA of Montana, Missoula

The most touching story I can tell you is about a family - a single mother who is a foster parent for two adults with disabilities. P's days are quite full with tending to the needs of her small family and work outside the home. The simple act of preparing to leave the house is major event yet P has a desire to provide a high quality of life and community engagement for her Foster family. Her commitment to her children participating in VSA's New Visions Dance Class is a testament to the impact which the arts have on the lives of individuals.

C, a young man who grew up in an abusive environment with intellectual disability, participates independently and joyfully. He brings his whole presence to the class and never fails to make us all smile. He is engaged and engaging.

M, a young, nonverbal woman in a wheelchair as a result of a stroke prior to her first birthday, participates with her foster mother and gives UM student interns an opportunity to learn how to provide creative movement for a person in a wheelchair. P demonstrates dance with M as a 'solo' performer and in group activities.

For this family, the New Visions Dance class is a family affair. This is something they do together, every week. This particular program is making a difference - one family at a time. Both of these adults also participate in VSA Choir. Their foster mother's dedication to quality of life and social engagement for her foster adults could not be fulfilled without VSA Montana.